

Heartleaf Arnica

Arnica cordifolia



Heartleaf Arnica typically grows in the dappled shade under a forest canopy. The death of many of the Engelmann Spruce from the Spruce Bark Beetle has exposed many populations to a much more sunny environment and it will be interesting to see how they survive in future, hot, dry years.

A related European species called Leopard's Bane (*Arnica montana*) has been used for many years as an herbal medicine. The flowers contain a compound called arnicin that has been used to heal bruises, chapped lips, and the pain from arthritis. When taken internally, which is not recommended, it has been reported to increase circulation and raise body temperature. This plant is a good example for the argument that even if we do not value native species for their beauty and their roles in the natural environment, they are important to protect as a potential source of drugs to solve human health problems.